“One Light, a Thousand Names: The Testimony of World Scriptures to the Oneness of God”

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Introduction: One Light Beyond a Thousand Names

Across the ages, in deserts and mountains, in jungles and cities, humankind has looked toward the heavens and asked: *Who created all this?*
From the Himalayas to the Andes, from Persia’s plains to Africa’s savannas, the answer, whispered by sages and seers, has always been the same—**there is One**, beyond name, beyond form.

Though religions arose in different lands and languages, their innermost essence flows from the same source: the recognition of **One Supreme Reality**, unborn, unchanging, and incomparable.

From the **Rig Veda** to the **Qur’an**, humanity’s dialogue with the Divine reveals a single, radiant truth: the **unity of all existence in the One**.

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1. Hinduism: The One Known by Many Names

Scriptural Text

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति
Ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti

“That which exists is One; the wise call it by many names.”
(Rig Veda 1.164.46)

This verse forms the foundation of Vedic monotheism. The Supreme Reality (*Ekam*) is One, though the sages call It by many names—Agni, Indra, Varuna—all but manifestations of the same eternal principle.

In the **Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.11)** it is declared:

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः
Eko devaḥ sarvabhūteṣu gūḍhaḥ

“There is One God hidden in all beings.”

The Hindu conception of the Divine transcends imagery or personification. **Brahman** is beyond words and thought: *“Neti, neti” — “Not this, not that.”* (Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.3.6)

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2. Zoroastrianism: Ahura Mazda, the Light of Truth

Scriptural Text

Yathā ahū vairyo...
"As the Lord to be chosen, so too is Truth but One."
(Yasna 27.13)

Zarathustra preached devotion to **Ahura Mazda**, the One Creator, Source of Light and Truth. In *Gatha Yasna 31.7* we read:

"He is the One, without a second, the Creator of righteousness and order in the cosmos."

Zoroastrian monotheism does not admit a rival god of evil; darkness is not a deity but merely the absence of divine light.

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3. Buddhism: The Unborn, the Undying

While Buddhism is often viewed as nontheistic, its deeper metaphysical layers speak of an ultimate reality — **the Unborn**, the **Unconditioned**.

Scriptural Text

Atthi, bhikkhave, ajātaṃ abhūtaṃ akataṃ asaṅkhataṃ.
"There is, O monks, the Unborn, the Unmade, the Uncreated, the Unconditioned."
(Udāna 8:3)

And in the **Dhammapada (278)**:

Ekam hi saccam na dutīyam atthi.
"There is only one truth; there is no second."

Here, "the Unborn" is not a personal deity, but **the timeless, formless reality**—the luminous ground of awakening from which all Buddhas arise.

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4. Taoism: The Way Beyond Words

Scriptural Text

道可道，非常道。名可名，非常名。
Dào kě dào, fēi cháng Dào; míng kě míng, fēi cháng míng.

"The Tao that can be spoken is not the eternal Tao;
The name that can be named is not the everlasting Name."
(Tao Te Ching 1:1)

In Taoism, **Tao** is the nameless principle from which heaven and earth arise — the unseen unity of existence. The Tao is beyond attributes, beyond duality, yet manifests as the order of nature and harmony of being.

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5. Confucianism: Heaven, the Moral One

Scriptural Text

天命之謂性，率性之謂道。修道之謂教。
Tiān mìng zhī wèi xìng, shuài xìng zhī wèi dào, xiū dào zhī wèi jiào.

“The command of Heaven is called human nature;
following it is called the Way;
cultivating the Way is called teaching.”
(Zhong Yong 1:1)

For Confucius, **Heaven (Tiān)** is not mere sky but the One moral intelligence governing the universe. He said: *“Heaven sees as the people see; Heaven hears as the people hear.”* (Analects 4:15)

Heaven is One — unseen, formless, yet the source of moral order.

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6. Shinto: The Primordial Kami Beyond Form

Shinto venerates many *kami* (divine spirits), yet the oldest text, the *Kojiki*, tells of one primordial being.

Scriptural Text

天之御中主神 (Ame-no-Minakanushi-no-Kami)

“The Divine Lord of the Center of Heaven” — the first to appear before all forms and gods.

In the *Nihon Shoki* it is written:

“Ame-no-Minakanushi governs the universe, unseen yet pervading all.”

This represents the Shinto vision of an invisible, singular Divine Source beyond multiplicity.

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7. The Maya: Hunab Ku, the One Without Form

In the sacred *Chilam Balam de Chumayel*, it is said:

“Hunab Ku is the Only God, without form, without image, the Creator of all that exists.”

The name *Hunab Ku* literally means “One God” — the transcendent essence behind all deities and the origin of the cosmos.

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8. The Aboriginal Peoples: Baiame, the Great Spirit

Among Australia’s Aboriginal peoples, the Supreme Being is called **Baiame** or **Bunjil**, the Great Spirit.

Oral Tradition

“Baiame created the earth, the waters, and the sky, and gave laws to humankind.
He has no body, no shape, and is eternal.”

Thus even among ancient tribes, we find a natural monotheism: one Creator above all ancestral spirits.

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9. Africa: The Hidden One Behind All Names

Across Africa, ancient traditions speak of a single Supreme Being:

- Among the Yoruba: **Olodumare**
- Among the Akan (Ghana): **Nyame**
- In Ancient Egypt: **Amun**, "the Hidden One."

Egyptian Hymn

"Amon, hidden to gods and men,
the One without a second."
(Papyrus Leiden 300)

Even amid polytheistic expressions, the African soul knew one transcendent Source above all visible powers.

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10. Europe: The One Beyond the Gods

The Greek philosopher **Xenophanes** (6th century BCE) proclaimed:

"There is one God, greatest among gods and men,
not like mortals in body or in mind."

And in the **Norse Edda**, it is told:

"Before all things, there was only Ginnungagap — the divine void, the One."

Thus even in the mythic age of Europe, the intuition of One Reality shone through the veil of myth.

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11. Islam: The Final Revelation of Divine Unity

Scriptural Text

قُلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدٌ. ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ. لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ. وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ.
Qul huwa Allāhu aḥad, Allāhu ṣ-ṣamad, lam yalid wa lam yūlad, wa lam yakun lahu kufuwan aḥad.

"Say: He is Allah, the One.
Allah, the Eternal Refuge.
He neither begets nor is begotten,
and there is none comparable unto Him."
(Qur'an, Al-Ikhlāṣ 112:1–4)

This chapter of the Qur'an is the most concise and complete declaration of monotheism ever revealed — the culmination of humanity's timeless search for the One beyond all comparison.

Conclusion: The Prophetic Call to Unity

الْأَنْبِيَاءُ إِخْوَةٌ لِعَلَّاتٍ، دِينُهُمْ وَاحِدٌ
Al-anbiyā'u ikhwatun li'allāt, dīnu-hum wāḥidun

Translation: "The prophets are brothers; their religion is one."
(Hadith — al-Bukhārī no. 3443; Muslim no. 2365)

And in another narration:

إِنَّا مَعْشَرَ الأَنْبِيَاءِ أُمِرْنَا أَنْ نُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ عَلَى قَدْرِ عُقُولِهِمْ، وَأَنْ نَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ: لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
Innâ ma'shara al-anbiyâ'i umirnâ an nukallima an-nâsa 'alâ qadri 'uqûlihim, wa an nad'uwahum ilâ kalimatin wâḥidah: lā ilāha illallāh.

Translation: "We, the prophets, were commanded to address people according to their understanding, and to call them to one word: *There is no god but Allah.*"
(Hadith — ad-Dailamī, Musnad al-Firdaws, no. 2455, from Anas ibn Malik)

Thus ends the long journey of names, forms, and symbols.
Behind every revelation and language lies but **one eternal light** — the same Divine Reality known to all who seek in truth.

لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
Lā ilāha illallāh

"There is no god but Allah."